



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

TRANSACTIONS
OF THE
AMERICAN PHILOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION.

1903.

I. — *Studies in Tacitean Ellipsis: Descriptive Passages.*

BY PROF. FRANK GARDNER MOORE,
DARTMOUTH COLLEGE.

THE brevity of Tacitus is usually felt as a quality of the narrator of events, who aims constantly at rapidity of movement, not without a certain scorn for petty detail, and hence omitting all that is not essential to his narrative. And yet this pace is not confined to less important events, in order that the historian may move more slowly through scenes of greater significance. There is the same brevity, as a rule, even where momentous issues are concerned, and nowhere is it more marked than in vivid descriptions.¹ Not that impatience to return to narrative furnishes any adequate explanation of these vigorous outline pictures. Other motives influenced Tacitus even more than his passion for conciseness. Few,

¹ Of those who have written upon the various forms of ellipsis in Tacitus no one in the writer's knowledge has separately considered his use of this figure in descriptive passages. Thus, the following dissertations, valuable as they are, contain little or nothing to the present purpose: Wetzell, C., *De usu verbi substantivi Tacitino* (Cassel, 1876); Clemm, G., *De breviloquentiae Taciteae quibusdam generibus* (Leipzig, 1881); Stuhl, C., *Quibus condicionibus Tacitus ellipsim verbi admisit*, etc. (Würzburg dissertation, 1900; cf. however, pp. 7-8, 23-24, 29). Nor is anything to be gathered from Constans, L., *Étude sur la langue de Tacite*, 1893, p. 118 ff.; or Gantrelle, J., *Grammaire et Style de Tacite*², 1882, p. 44; or Draeger's *Syntax und Stil des Tacitus*. The present paper, it may be needless to add, rests upon nearly complete collections from all the works of Tacitus. In the citations the text of Nipperdey has been followed in the *Annals*, Heraeus in the *Histories*, and Gudeman in the minor works.

surely, will be prepared to dispute the statement of Nipperdey¹ that brevity was to Tacitus not an end in itself, but a means to work upon the feelings of the reader, — a truth more than ever obvious if we exclude for the time all thought of ellipsis in narration, and limit our view to pointed description, with omitted verbs. These descriptive passages may reach a considerable length. More frequently they are brief descriptive touches in the midst of narration. They may sum up the character of a man, or outline the peculiarities or the customs of a nation. Thus characterization will necessarily be included with description, since the descriptions in many instances take on a broader range, and include a résumé of a situation, or even an estimate of a whole period. It will be seen that from the nature of the case the ellipsis with which we have to do in all passages of the kind will be overwhelmingly that of the substantive verb, leaving a series of nominatives, an *enumeratio partium*, which has the effect, not so much of a formal description, as of a suggestive sketch. The question will inevitably arise whether these are, after all, cases of ellipsis, or not, — whether the insertion of verbs, even in thought, would not have been resented by the author of these bold sketches, as though a literalist in interpreting a Whistler to a class of beginners should add a line here and a line there, with pedantic remarks about the eccentricities of the artist. And if we discard the idea of ellipsis and have recourse to the term nominative absolute, — with some of the writers of dissertations upon the Latinity of Tacitus,² — the appropriateness of the term must be considered, together with the possibility that some day our grammars may recognize a nominative of intimation, requiring no verb to bring it into line with the syntax of orthodoxy, and of scarcely less importance than its companion, the infinitive of intimation, more commonly labelled the historical infinitive.

It was formerly claimed that Tacitus's brevity sprang from his desire to be objective,³ — a claim sufficiently untenable on the most general grounds. Vividly as he pictures to us men

¹ *Annals*⁸, *Einl.* p. 42.

² Thus Stuhl, *op. cit.* pp. 8, 23-24.

³ Draeger, *op. cit.*³ § 238.

and society from Tiberius to Vespasian, he has given us almost nothing that is purely objective. He has forced us to see everything with his own eyes, — has imparted to us his personal impressions of things and men, and seldom if ever allows us to escape from the subjectivity of his method. At present certainly the subjective individualism of Tacitus is duly recognized as one of his leading traits.¹ And a collection of impressionist descriptions from the *Agricola* on down through the *Annals* gives a striking array of evidence that the personality of the writer dominates every attempt to describe or to characterize; that we cannot hope even to imagine that we see things as they really were, but only as they appeared to the keen eye of a Tacitus.

The more a writer sets himself to give his own impressions, instead of following a traditional objective method, the more certain is he to develop his own mode of expressing those impressions, or to adopt and perfect a mode which had been employed by his predecessors. Obviously the impressionistic resources of the word-painter lie largely in the direction of selecting salient points, each one of which will stimulate the imagination of the sympathetic reader; and then in producing a whole picture in a few bold strokes, every one of which testifies to the individuality of the author. To omit the copula, to reduce compound tenses to a string of participles, to strip verbs to the stark nakedness of the infinitive of intimation, — these were the methods ready to hand.² Often

¹ Cf. Norden, *Die antike Kunstprosa*, I. p. 326, and especially 327: "Durch diese Subjektivität unterscheidet sich Tacitus von den meisten antiken Schriftstellern und übertrifft auch die, welche ihm darin ähnlich sind. Dieses Überströmen einer mächtigen Individualität, die, sich selbst dessen unbewusst, allen Menschen und Begebenheiten ihren Stempel aufdrückt, weist Tacitus eine fast singuläre Stellung in der antiken Litteraturgeschichte an, in welcher die Unterordnung des Individuellen unter das Traditionelle fast ein Dogma war." Cf. p. 322, n. 1; 243-244. Cf. Wackermann, O., *Der Geschichtschreiber P. Cornelius Tacitus*, Gütersloh, 1898, pp. 74, 83.

² Another method, not employed by Tacitus, is seen in Terence, *Phormio*, 950-951:

Nolō volo; volo nōlo rursum; cāpe cedo;

Quod dictum, indictumst; quōd modo erat ratum, inritumst.

Here the wavering of the old men is cleverly pictured in the fewest words, —

employed before, both in prose and verse, either in narrative or in descriptions and character sketches, they were now to be given a far wider use by Tacitus in every variety of characterization and description, not to mention their employment in vivid narration. In many cases in prose it is impossible to say that the verb "to be" was really excluded by the writer, and not merely omitted by ellipsis, especially where the passage is a brief one. With increasing length, however, it becomes more and more probable that the writer did not even intend a verb to be supplied with the first touch of description, certainly not with the remaining features of his picture.

Even Cicero has passages which may be interpreted in an impressionistic sense. Thus in *de Off.* 3, 47: *nostra res publica . . . quae Cannensi calamitate accepta maiores animos habuit quam umquam rebus secundis; nulla timoris significatio, nulla mentio pacis.* Grammatically speaking, this is, of course, equivalent to *nulla erat*, etc., but rhetorically there is every reason to think that Cicero was better satisfied with his word-picture than with a logical statement.¹ If epistolary examples are not to be excluded, we may cite *ad Att.* 4, 3, 3: *Clamor, lapides, fustes, gladii, haec improvisa omnia,—a comic fragment according to Ribbeck, Com. Rom. Frag.³ p. 145, and perhaps to be classed with narratives.*

More elaborate descriptive sketches are to be found in Sallust, but not very frequently.² Thus *Jugurtha* 17, 5: *Mare saevom importuosum: ager frugum fertilis, bonus pecori, arbore infecundus: caelo terraque penuria aquarum. Genus hominum salubri corpore, velox, patiens laborum.*

In portrayal of character, or the estimate of a man's qualities, a similar form had been used by Cicero, as in *Brutus*

nothing inserted which could be spared (except 'st, 951), nothing omitted which ordinary wits could not supply. It is needless to say that this method must have been very freely used in animated conversation. For that reason it would be avoided by the historian, the majority of whose ellipses are at the furthest remove from familiar and everyday speech, as also from the style of lively debate (as in *Cic. de Off.* 3, 87, for example).

¹ On the frequent ellipsis with *nullus*, cf. Stuhl, *op. cit.* p. 17; Wetzell, *op. cit.*

p. 5.

² Cf. Constans, L., *De sermone Sallustiano*, Paris, 1880, p. 252.

246: M. Messalla minor natu quam nos, nullo modo inops, sed non nimis ornatus genere verborum; prudens acutus, minime incautus patronus, in causis cognoscendis componendisque diligens, magni laboris, multae operae multarumque causarum. A copula may be inserted, to be sure, but only to the detriment of such a series of characterizations.¹

Sallust's familiar portrait of Catiline is another case in point (5, 3-6): Corpus patiens inediae, algoris, vigiliae supra quam cuiquam credibile est; animus audax, subdolus, varius, cuius rei lubet simulator ac dissimulator, alieni appetens, sui profusus, ardens in cupiditatibus; satis eloquentiae, sapientiae parum: vastus animus immoderata, incredibilia, nimis alta semper cupiebat.²

A well-known parallel is Livy's estimate of Hannibal, 21, 4, 6-7: Caloris ac frigoris patientia par; cibi potionisque desiderio naturali, non voluptate modus finitus; vigiliarum somnique nec die nec nocte discriminata tempora; id quod gerendis rebus superesset, quieti datum; ea neque molli strato neque silentio accersita.

In such passages as these it is clear enough that the omission of the verb is not due merely to the desire to avoid unnecessary repetition. Evidently there was a conscious aim to sketch in bold lines, all the more impressive because they appear to be hasty strokes, leaving the imagination to complete the picture. If the writer was conscious at first of an ellipsis, he had soon drifted away into what is purely pictorial, and not to be reduced to prosaic assertion, except with the loss of its most characteristic feature.

¹ Another example from Cicero is *Cato Maior* 12: Nec vero ille [Fabius Maximus] in luce modo atque in oculis civium magnus, sed intus domique praestantior. Qui sermo, quae praecepta, quanta notitia antiquitatis, scientia iuris augurii! Multae etiam, ut in homine Romano, litterae; omnia memoria tenebat non domestica solum, sed etiam externa. The exclamatory sentence, of course, does not concern us here, except in its suggestive association with the other brief and emphatic assertions, of the kind in which the omission of the copula is most frequent.

² In the similar portrait of Sulla (*Jugurtha* 95, 3) the first member contains a *fuit*, but its influence cannot be felt beyond an infinitive (*otio luxurioso esse*) in the middle of the passage.

From Vergil it is evident that Tacitus drew no small part of his inspiration in this, as in so many other directions.¹ An instance from *Aeneid* 1, 637-642 :

At domus interior regali splendida luxu
Instruitur, mediisque parant convivias tectis :
Arte laboratae vestes ostroque superbo,
Ingens argentum mensis caelataque in auro
Fortia facta patrum, series longissima rerum
Per tot ducta viros antiquae ab origine gentis.

Here it is possible to supply *instruuntur*, or an equivalent, from *instruitur* (638). But as the verses were read the hearer more naturally accepted lines 639-642 as a catalogue, leading up possibly to a verb, the omission of which gave him no trouble whatever. Thus *parant convivias* is amplified by an *enumeratio partium*, not in apposition, but independently treated.

Another example from the first book, 166-168 :

Fronte sub adversa scopulis pendentibus antrum,
Intus aquae dulces vivoque sedilia saxo,
Nympharum domus.

Also *ib.* 703-706 :

Quinquaginta intus famulae, quibus ordine longam
Cura penum struere et flammis adolere penates ;
Centum aliae totidemque pares aetate ministri,
Qui, etc.

Aen. 2, 368-369 :

Crudelis ubique
Luctus, ubique pavor et plurima mortis imago.

Aen. 4, 200-202 :

Centum aras posuit vigilemque sacraverat ignem,
Excubias divom aeternas ; pecudumque cruore
Pingue solum et variis florentia limina sertis.²

¹ Schmaus in his dissertation, *Tacitus ein Nachahmer Vergils*, Bamberg, 1887, confines himself to a few instances of ellipsis with *postquam*, *ubi*, etc., and ignores the elliptical descriptions (pp. 45-46). Wetzell, *op. cit.* p. 57, emphasizes Tacitus's indebtedness to Vergil in this general direction, but has nothing pertinent to the present inquiry.

² Taking *solum*, etc., as nominative with *Ladewig*.

Aen. 3, 618-620:

Domus sanie dapibusque cruentis,
Intus opaca, ingens. Ipse arduus, altaque pulsat
Sidera, etc.

In the description of the Harpies, *ib.* 216-218:

Virginei volucrum voltus, foedissima ventris
Proluvies uncaeque manus et pallida semper
Ora fame.

And of Scylla, *ib.* 426-428:

Prima hominis facies et pulchro pectore virgo
Pube tenus, postrema immani corpore pistrix
Delphinum caudas utero commissa luporum.

Also of Achaemenides, *ib.* 593-595:

Dira inluvies immissaque barba,
Consertum tegumen spinis; at cetera Graius,
Et quondam patriis ad Troiam missus in armis.

A few typical examples will thus confirm the belief that Vergil's omission of the copula in such passages had nothing to do with the exigencies of his metre, as has been maintained.¹ He had unquestionably adopted this more picturesque mode of description by a brief summary of leading features. Essentially poetic in its nature, it had not commended itself for general use in historic prose, in spite of the influence of Sallust. It remained for Tacitus to appropriate it with his usual skill to his own purposes, in longer or shorter descriptive passages, and in character sketches, whether of individuals or of nationalities.

In the *Dialogus* there is little material for our present purpose. Naturally enough one finds a series of characterizations such as in 25: Adstrictior Calvus, nervosior Asinius, splendidior Caesar, amarior Caelius, gravior Brutus, vehementior et plenior et valentior Cicero. But this does not differ from Cicero himself. A similar passage is found in 18: Sic Catoni seni comparatus C. Gracchus plenior et uberior, sic

¹ Schmaus, *op. cit.* p. 45.

Graccho politior et ornatio Crassus, etc. More suggestive of certain passages in the *Histories* and the *Annals*, but in itself no novelty, is 36: Hinc leges adsiduae et populare nomen, hinc contiones magistratuum . . . hinc . . . hinc . . .¹

In the *Agricola* characterizations are after the manner of those already cited from Sallust, and obviously under his influence. Thus, 9: Iam vero tempora curarum remissionumque divisa: ubi conventus ac iudicia poscerent, gravis intentus severus, et saepius misericors: ubi officio satis factum, nulla ultra potestatis persona.

Of the Britons, 11: sermo haud multum diversus, in deposcendis periculis eadem audacia et, ubi advenere, in detrectandis eadem formido.² Also in 12: In pedite robur; . . . Honestior auriga, etc. Of Britain itself, 12: Solum, praeter oleam vitemque et cetera calidioribus terris oriri sueta, frugum patiens, fecundum.

Turning to the *Germania*, and collecting the many characterizations in this elliptical form, one is not surprised to find that they number about seventy.³ Taken separately a large proportion of these would call for no remark. A brief statement with a negative, or with emphasis upon a demonstrative or an adjective, with *hinc*, *inde*, *plus*, and the like, would have occasioned no surprise in an earlier writer, but taken together they become a marked feature of the book, which owes no small part of its poetic coloring to these impressionistic touches. It is needless to give more than a few examples; thus, 4: Unde habitus quoque corporum, quamquam in tanto hominum numero, idem omnibus: truces et caerulei oculi, rutilae comae, magna corpora et tantum ad impetum valida: laboris atque operum non eadem patientia, minimeque sitim aestumque tolerare, frigora atque inedia caelo soloque adsueverunt.⁴

¹ Cf. Wetzell, *op. cit.* p. 19.

² Cf. 11: Habitus corporum varii, atque ex eo argumenta; 21: Inde etiam habitus nostri honor et frequens toga.

³ If the term "characterizations" may cover all statements as to the manners, etc., of the Germans.

⁴ Here it is possible to regard *oculi*, *comae*, *corpora*, as appositives to *habitus*, but a comparison with other passages of the kind makes it probable that the *enumeratio partium* is independent of what precedes. In a series of nominatives

Another, less open to debate, 5: Terra etsi aliquanto specie differt, in universum tamen aut silvis horrida aut paludibus foeda, umidior qua Gallias, ventosior qua Noricum ac Panoniam adspicit; satis ferax, frugiferarum arborum [in]patiens, pecorum fecunda, sed plerumque improcera.¹

Another instance brings the "historical" infinitive into the description, 7: et in proximo pignora, unde feminarum ululatus audiri, unde vagitus infantium. Hi cuique sanctissimi testes, hi maximi laudatores, etc.²

In this connection should be cited, 30: Duriora genti corpora, stricti artus, minax vultus et maior animi vigor. Multum, ut inter Germanos, rationis ac sollertiae: praeponere electos, audire praepositos, etc. (a series of nine infinitives).³ . . . Omne robur in pedite, quem . . . Rari excursus et fortuita pugna.

Further descriptive passages with the predominance of simple nominatives are, 23: Potui umor ex hordeo aut frumento, . . . Cibi simplices, agrestia poma, recens fera aut lac concretum: sine adparatu, sine blandimentis expellunt famem. 40: Laeti tunc dies, festa loca, quaecumque adventu hospitioque dignatur. . . . clausum omne ferrum; pax et quies tunc tantum nota, tunc tantum amata, etc. 46: Fennis

of intimation it is not difficult to accept *tolerare* as an infinitive of intimation, leaving *frigora*, etc., to stand by itself (after a semicolon).

¹ In this case the fact that no verb was intended to be supplied with *horrida*, *foeda*, etc., made the concluding clause *sed plerumque improcera* less harsh than it has usually been felt to be. An enumeration of features could easily be followed by a correcting statement, relating to the last item in the enumeration. Tacitus's first readers would probably not have agreed with his modern editors in positively requiring the insertion of *sunt*.

² The controverted question as to *audiri* in this passage may receive some illumination from the examples cited below of such infinitives used in connection with nominatives of intimation in descriptions; cf. pp. 14-18, 21, 23.

³ These infinitives have been treated by most commentators as epexegetic, in apposition with *multum* . . . *rationis ac sollertiae*. Furneaux and Gudeman retain the idea of apposition, but style the infinitives historical, without explaining their divergence from the accepted use of terms. It is surely more probable that the *infinitivus adumbrativus* here describes in outline, without grammatical reference to the words preceding, and that we have thus an example of such infinitives in a general statement belonging to *present* time, having in themselves no sense of time at all.

mira feritas, foeda paupertas: non arma, non equi, non penates; victui herba, vestitui pelles, cubile humus: solae in sagittis opes quas inopia ferri ossibus asperant.

After such pen-pictures of the men of the North it is not strange to find in the historical works a vivid portraiture worked out by the same method of enumerating the more striking features, and leaving the imagination of the receptive reader to complete the picture.

From the character sketches in the *Histories* we may select a few specimens:

1, 10, Mucianus: *Luxuria industria, comitate adrogantia, malis bonisque artibus mixtus; nimiae voluptates, cum vacaret; quotiens expedierat, magnae virtutes. . . . variis inlecebris potens, et cui expeditius fuerit tradere imperium quam obtinere.*

1, 48, Vinius: *Pater illi praetoria familia, maternus avus e proscriptis. Prima militia infamis: . . . mox Galbae amicitia in abruptum tractus, audax callidus promptus, et prout animum intendisset, pravus aut industrius eadem vi.*

1, 49, Galba: *Vetus in familia nobilitas, magnae opes; ipsi medium ingenium, magis extra vitia quam cum virtutibus. Famae nec incuriosus nec venditator; pecuniae alienae non adpetens, suae parcus, publicae avarus; amicorum libertorumque . . . patiens, . . . ignarus.*

2, 5, Vespasian: *Vespasianus acer militiae,¹ anteire agmen, locum castris capere, noctu diuque consilio ac, si res posceret, manu hostibus obniti, cibo fortuito, veste habituque vix a gregario milite discrepans, prorsus, si avaritia abesset, antiquis ducibus par.*

2, 5, Mucianus: *aptior sermone, dispositu provisuque civilium rerum peritus.*

4, 55, Classicus: *Classicus nobilitate opibusque ante alios: regium illi genus et pace belloque clara origo.*

¹The writer has ventured to insert a comma after *acer militiae*, from the conviction that to Tacitus and his Roman readers *acer* was not simply in agreement with the subject of the infinitives, but formed with *militiae* a distinct element in this portrait of Vespasian, which consists of adjective phrases (one of them assuming the form of an ablative of quality,—*cibo fortuito*) combined with infinitives of intimation, and all upon an even footing, as the different features which he wished to emphasize.

From the *Annals* we take the following :

1, 33, Germanicus : Nam iuveni civile ingenium, mira comitas et diversa ab Tiberii sermone, vultu, adrogantibus et obscuris.

2, 2, Vonones : Sed prompti aditus, obvia comitas ; ignotae Parthis virtutes, nova vitia, et quia ipsorum moribus aliena, perinde odium pravis et honestis.

3, 40, Florus and Sacrovir : Nobilitas ambobus et maiorum bona facta, eoque Romana civitas olim data, cum id, etc.

4, 1, Sejanus : Corpus illi laborum tolerans, animus audax ; sui obtegens, in alios criminator ; iuxta adulatio et superbia ; palam compositus pudor, intus summa apiscendi libido, eiusque causa modo largitio et luxus, saepius industria ac vigilantia, etc.

5, 1, Livia : Sanctitate domus priscum ad morem, comis ultra quam antiquis feminis probatum ; mater inpotens, uxor facilis et cum artibus mariti, simulatione filii bene composita.

6, 51, Tiberius : Pater ei Nero et utrimque origo gentis Claudiae, . . . Casus prima ab infantia ancipites. . . . Morum quoque tempora illi diversa : egregium vita famaue, quoad privatus vel in imperiis sub Augusto fuit ; occultum ac subdolum fingendis virtutibus, donec Germanicus ac Drusus superfuere.

13, 45, Poppaea : sermo comis, nec absurdum ingenium. Modestiam praeferre et lascivia uti : rarus in publicum egressus, etc.¹

From characterizations of a people or word-portraits of men we turn to descriptions in the midst of narration. These range from mere descriptive touches, — brief and pointed, but extremely numerous, — to more elaborate sketches of a situation, or a résumé of conditions through a longer or shorter period.

Descriptive touches can be illustrated in a few typical examples only :

¹ Here again the infinitive of intimation, in combination with the other nominatives. Comparing Sallust's portrait of Sempronia, which Tacitus could not have forgotten, one may suspect that in that case also the infinitive after *ingenium eius haud absurdum* was not meant as an apposition (*Cat.* 25, 5).

From the *Agricola*, 5: Non sane alias excitatio magisque in ambiguo Britannia fuit: trucidati veterani, incensae coloniae, intercepti exercitus, etc. 16: eadem inertia erga hostis, similis petulantia castrorum, nisi quod, etc. 17: Sed ubi cum cetero orbe Vespasianus et Britanniam recipiavit, magni duces, egregii exercitus et minuta hostium spes. 32: Nec quidquam ultra formidinis: vacua castella, senum coloniae, inter male parentis et iniuste imperantis aegra municipia et discordantia. Hic dux, hic exercitus: ibi tributa et metalla, etc. 38: vastum ubique silentium, secreti colles, fumantia procul tecta, nemo exploratoribus obviis.

But in the most striking example in the *Agricola* description and narration are inextricably interwoven, — 37: Tum vero patentibus locis grande et atrox spectaculum: sequi, vulnerare, capere, atque eosdem oblatis aliis trucidare. Iam hostium, prout cuique ingenium erat, catervae armatorum paucioribus terga praestare, quidam inermes ultro ruere ac se morti offerre. Passim arma et corpora et laceri artus et cruenta humus; et aliquando etiam victis ira virtusque.

In the *Histories* descriptive touches in the merest outline are extremely frequent, especially in the first two books, from which alone between fifty and sixty instances may be gathered.

Book I, 17: Sermo [Pisonis] erga patrem imperatoremque reverens, de se moderatus; nihil in vultu habituque mutatum, etc.

I, 20: Ubique hasta et sector, et inquieta urbs actionibus. Ac tamen grande gaudium, quod, etc.

I, 35: ignavissimus quisque et, ut res docuit, in periculo non ausurus nimii verbis, lingua feroces; nemo scire et omnes adfirmare, donec, etc.

I, 40: Neque populi aut plebis ulla vox, sed attoniti vultus et conversae ad omnia aures; non tumultus, non quies, quale magni metus et magnae irae silentium est.

I, 82: Postera die velut capta urbe clausae domus, rarus per vias populus, maesta plebs; deiecti in terram militum vultus ac plus tristitiae quam paenitentiae.

2, 13: Quippe in acie nihil praedae, inopes agrestes et vilia arma, nec, etc.

2, 19: Iamque totis castris modesti sermones, et . . . laudari providentia ducis, quod, etc.

2, 22: Vixdum orto die plena propugnatoribus moenia, fulgentes armis virisque campi.

2, 38: Modo turbulenti tribuni modo consules praevalidi, et in urbe ac foro temptamenta civilium bellorum.

2, 41: Apud Othonianos pavidi duces, miles ducibus infensus, mixta vehicula et lixae et praeruptis utrimque fossis via quieto quoque agmini angusta. Circumsistere alii signa sua, quaerere alii; incertus undique clamor adcurrentium vocantium.

2, 89: Quattuor legionum aquilae per frontem totidemque circa e legionibus aliis vexilla, mox duodecim alarum signa et post peditum ordines eques, dein quattuor et triginta cohortes, etc. . . . Decora facies et non Vitellio principe dignus exercitus.

3, 22: Proelium tota nocte varium anceps atrox, his, rursus illis exitiabile. . . . Eadem utraque acie arma, crebris interrogationibus notum pugnae signum, permixta vexilla, etc.

3, 67: voces populi blandae et intempestivae, miles minaci silentio.

3, 83: Saeva ac deformis urbe tota facies: alibi proelia et vulnera, alibi balineae popinaeque; simul cruor et strues corporum, iuxta scorta et scortis similes; quantum in luxurioso otio libidinum, quidquid in acerbissima captivitate scelerum, prorsus ut, etc.¹

4, 1: plenae caedibus viae, cruenta fora templaque, etc.

5, 13: Obstinatio viris feminisque par ac . . . maior vitae metus quam mortis.

In the *Annals* the same mode of description is employed with great frequency:

Book 1, 49: Diversa omnium, quae umquam accidere, civilium armorum facies. . . . Clamor vulnera sanguis palam, causa in occulto; . . . permissa vulgo licentia atque ultio et satietas.

1, 61: Medio campi albertia ossa, ut fugerant, ut resti-

¹ Cf. p. 20 (*Hist.* 3, 30).

terant, disiecta vel aggerata. . . . Lucis propinquis barbarae arae, apud quas, etc.

1, 64: Contra Cheruscis sueta apud paludes proelia, procera membra, hastae ingentes, etc.

1, 65: Neque is miseriarum finis. Struendum vallum, petendus agger; . . . non tentoria manipulis, non fomenta sauciis, etc.

2, 20-21: utrisque necessitas in loco, spes in virtute, salus ex victoria. Nec minor Germanis animus, etc.

2, 80: Contra veterani ordinibus ac subsidiis instructi: hinc militum, inde locorum asperitas, sed non animus, non spes, ne tela quidem nisi agrestia, aut subitum in usum properata.

3, 4: Dies, quo reliquiae [Germanici] tumulto Augusti inferebantur, modo per silentium vastus, modo ploratibus inquires; plena urbis itinera, conlucentes per campum Martis faces.

4, 25: Ab Romanis confertus pedes, dispositae turmae, cuncta proelio provisa: hostibus contra omnium nesciis non arma, non ordo, non consilium, sed pecorum modo trahi occidi capi.

4, 62-63: . . . lamentari . . . pavere . . .; nequedum comperto, quos illa vis perculisset, latior ex incerto metus. Ut coepere dimoveri obruta, concursus ad exanimos complexentium, osculantium; et saepe certamen, etc.

4, 67: Caeli temperies hieme mitis . . . aestas in favonium obversa et aperto circum pelago peramoena.

4, 70: Quo intendisset oculos, quo verba acciderent, fuga vastitas; deseri itinera fora.

12, 7: adductum et quasi virile servitium. Palam severitas ac saepius superbia; nihil domi inpudicum, nisi dominationi expediret.

14, 63: tum ancilla domina validior et Poppaea non nisi in perniciem uxoris nupta, postremo crimen omni exitio gravius.¹

¹ Nipperdey supplies *patienda fuerunt*, or an equivalent. But the aggravations of Octavia's lot might be merely enumerated, without any distinct thought of a predicate.

16, 13: Non sexus, non aetas periculo vacua. Servitia perinde et ingenua plebes raptim exstingui, etc.

16, 29: non illa nota et crebritate periculorum sueta iam senatus maestitia, sed novus et altior pavor manus et tela militum cernentibus.

The same mode of description in broad lines is also to be found on a larger scale, or with a more obviously pictorial intention, especially where a state of feeling is described, and the impressions of spectators dwelt upon; also in summarizing conditions.

Thus in the *Histories* 1, 4, — the feeling in Rome after the death of Nero: Sed patres laeti usurpata statim libertate licentius ut erga principem novum et absentem; primores equitum proximi gaudio patrum; pars populi integra et magnis domibus adnexa, clientes libertique damnatorum et exulum in spem erecti: plebs sordida et circo ac theatris sueta, simul deterimi servorum, aut qui adesis bonis per dedecus Neronis alebantur, maesti et rumorum avidi.¹

Of the impression made by Galba's entry into the city, with a glance at the unusual military conditions in the city, 1, 6: Tardum Galbae iter et cruentum interfectis Cingonio Varrone, etc. . . . Introitus in urbem trucidatis tot milibus inermium militum infaustus omine atque ipsis etiam, qui occiderant, formidolosus. Inducta legione Hispana, remanente ea, quam e classe Nero conscripserat, plena urbs exercitu insolito; multi ad hoc numeri e Germania, etc. . . . ingens novis rebus materia, etc.

In picturing conditions at the court of Galba, 1, 7: Venalia cuncta, praepotentes liberti, servorum manus subitis avidae et tamquam apud senem festinantes, eademque novae aulae mala, aequae gravia, non aequae excusata.

Of the state of things on the eve of Otho's departure from Rome 1, 88: Igitur motae urbis curae; nullus ordo metu aut periculo vacuus: primores senatus aetate invalidi et longa pace desides, segnis et oblita bellorum nobilitas, ignarus militiae eques, quanto magis occultare et abdere pavorem nite-

¹ Heraeus⁴ supplies *erant* with *laeti*, which reduces a vivid picture in outline to the level of mere statement of fact.

bantur, manifestius pavidī. . . . Sapientibus quietis et rei publicae cura; levissimus quisque et futuri improvidus spe vana tumens; multi adflicta fide in pace anxii, turbatis rebus alacres et per incerta tutissimi.

In 2, 70, the gruesome description of Vitellius's visit to the battlefield of Bedriacum: Inde Vitellius Cremonam flexit et . . . insistere Bedriacensibus campis ac vestigia recentis victoriae lustrare oculis concupivit,¹ foedum atque atrox spectaculum. Intra quadragensimum pugnae diem lacera corpora, trunci artus, putres virorum equorumque formae, infecta tabo humus, protritit arboribus ac frugibus dira vastitas. Nec minus inhumana pars viae, quam Cremonenses lauru rosaque constraverant, etc.

Vitellius's army marching out of Rome is thus described, 2, 99: Longe alia proficiscentis ex urbe Germanici exercitus species: non vigor corporibus, non ardor animis; lentum et rarum agmen, fluxa arma, segnes equi; inpatiens solis pulveris tempestatum, quantumque hebes ad sustinendum laborem miles, tanto ad discordias promptior.

In the account of the siege of Cremona, 3, 30: Ac rursus nova laborum facies: ardua urbis moenia, saxae turrets, ferati portarum obices, vibrans tela miles, frequens obstrictusque Vitellianis partibus Cremonensis populus, magna pars Italiae stato in eosdem dies mercatu congregata, etc.²

¹ Meiser punctuates with a full stop after *concupivit*, and a colon after *diem*. But the question is immaterial for the purpose in hand, since we have already had examples of nominatives in a series after a preceding accusative, instead of accusatives in apposition; cf. pp. 10, 22-25.

² Cf. p. 17 (*Hist.* 3, 83). In 3, 33, in the horrible scenes of the sack of Cremona occurs a sentence of vivid narrative in infinitives of intimation, into the midst of which is interjected the phrase *faces in manibus*, — a bit of description (cf. *Ann.* 3, 4, above, p. 18). In view of the unsatisfactory nature of the explanation that this stands for *faces in manibus habentes* (*gerentes, tenentes*), apparently unsupported by certain parallels, it may not be out of place to suggest that, if we could divest ourselves of habit, and take the infinitives, not as tenses of narration, but of mere picturesque suggestion, as a Roman doubtless did, it would not seem altogether strange to have such intimating infinitives (nominative) followed by an intimating nominative of another substantive, even singly, and accompanied only by a prepositional phrase. This would be an extreme example, only to be justified by the intense feeling provoked by the story. The passage is: *Quidam*

Among the scenes of the revolt under Civilis, Tacitus gives us this picture, 4, 62: Quippe intra vallum deformitas haud perinde notabilis: detexit ignominiam campus et dies. Revulsae imperatorum imagines, inhonora signa, fulgentibus hinc inde Gallorum vexillis; silens agmen et velut longae exsequiae; dux Claudius Sanctus effosso oculo dirus ore, ingenio debilior.

From the *Annals* not a few such descriptions may be quoted. Of conditions in the last days of Augustus, 1, 3: Domi res tranquillae, eadem magistratuum vocabula; iuniores post Actiacam victoriam, etiam senes plerique inter bella civium nati: quotus quisque reliquus, qui rem publicam vidisset? Igitur verso civitatis statu nihil usquam prisci et integri moris; omnes exuta aequalitate iussa principis aspectare, etc.

An impression of the reign of Augustus is given in 1, 9, in *oratio obliqua*: Non regno tamen neque dictatura, sed principis nomine constitutam rem publicam; mari Oceano aut amnibus longinquis saeptum imperium; legiones provincias classes, cuncta inter se conexas; ius apud cives, modestiam apud socios; urbem ipsam magnifico ornatu; pauca admodum vi tractata, quo ceteris quies esset.

Another, from the opposite point of view, in chapter 10, abounds in ellipses of *esse*, but does not have the pictorial effect.

In a historical résumé in descriptive terms, 3, 27-28: Hinc Gracchi et Saturnini, turbatores plebis, nec minor largitor nomine senatus Drusus; corrupti spe aut inlusi per intercessionem socii, etc. . . . Iamque non modo in commune, sed in singulos homines latae quaestiones; et corruptissima re publica plurimae leges. . . . Exin continua per viginti annos discordia; non mos, non ius; deterrima quaeque inipune ac multa honesta exitio fuere.

Again a sketch of conditions under Tiberius, 4, 6-7: Sua consulibus, sua praetoribus species; minorum quoque magis-

obvia aspernati verberibus tormentisque dominorum abdita scrutari, defossa eruere, faces in manibus, quas, etc. (Heraeus⁸ omits the comma after *erueret*. Cf. Clemm, *op. cit.* p. 49.)

tratum exercita potestas; legesque, si maiestatis quaestio eximeretur, bono in usu. . . . Rari per Italiam Caesaris agri, modesta servitia, intra paucos libertos domus; ac si quando cum privatis disceptaret, forum et ius.

No bolder example of the impressionist manner in description can be found in Tacitus than *Annals* 1, 41, in the account of the departure of Agrippina and the other women from Cologne at the time of the mutiny: Non florentis Caesaris neque suis in castris, sed velut in urbe victa facies; gemitusque ac planctus etiam militum aures oraque advertere. Progreduuntur contuberniis. Quis ille flebilis sonus? quid tam triste? Feminas inlustres; non centurionem ad tutelam, non militem, nihil imperatoriae uxoris aut comitatus soliti. Pergere ad Treviros et externam fidem. Pudor inde et miseratio et patris Agrippae, Augusti avi memoria; socer Drusus; ipsa insigni fecunditate, praeclara pudicitia; iam infans in castris genitus, in contubernio legionum eductus, quem militari vocabulo Caligulam appellabant, etc. Here the last *enumeratio*,—*socer Drusus, ipsa, infans*, is given as it presented itself to the minds of the conscience-stricken soldiers, and yet the historian seems to have deliberately avoided the *oratio obliqua*, even after such words as *pudor, miseratio, memoria*.¹

Another of the most important passages is *Histories* 2, 6. There is first a summary of conditions in the East from the time of the civil wars. This is followed by brief mention, in historical infinitives, of the altered feelings of the eastern legions,—their awakening to a consciousness of their own resources. Then an *enumeratio*, in a series of nominatives, not appositives to the preceding accusative, *vires suas*. It is a catalogue pure and simple, grammatically as incomplete as any index, but rhetorically most effective, and giving every evidence of study. But to quote the entire passage: Nulla seditio legionum; tantum adversus Parthos minae vario eventu, et proximo civili bello turbatis aliis inconcussa ibi pax,

¹ Cf. *Ann.* 15, 5, where a series (*Irritum obsidium; tutus manu et copiis Tigranes; fugati, qui expugnationem sumpserant*) really represents the enumeration of disadvantages in the mind of Vologaeses, as is shown by an almost immediate lapse into indirect discourse (*sibi inbecillum equitem*, etc.).

dein fides erga Galbam. Mox, ut Othonem ac Vitellium scelestis armis res Romanas raptum ire vulgatum est, ne penes ceteros imperii praemia, penes ipsos tantum servitii necessitas esset, fremere miles et vires suas circumspicere: septem legiones statim et cum ingentibus auxiliis Suria Iudaea-que, inde continua Aegyptus duaeque legiones, hinc Cappadocia Pontusque, et quidquid castrorum Armeniis praetenditur, Asia et ceterae provinciae nec virorum inopes et pecunia opulentae, quantum insularum mari cingitur, et parando interim bello secundum tutumque ipsum mare.

Finally, if after all these specimens of Tacitus's manner in descriptive passages, we turn to the opening chapters of the first book of the *Histories*, and read his characterization of the whole period which he proposes to cover, it is almost impossible to resist the conclusion that that passage also belongs with those we have been considering, in spite of its extraordinary extent, — that it is, in other words, not a narrative in epitome, but a vivid picture, painted with the same methods which he so constantly uses elsewhere. The second and third chapters show a complete suppression of verbs, with the exception of the brief opening sentence: *Opus adgredior opimum casibus*, etc., and a concluding reflection at the end of chapter three. Between these limits there are more than two hundred words. If one begins upon the officious task of inserting *erat, erant, est, sunt*, he finds that even with a reasonable economy of verbs some fifteen insertions will have to be made, and the result would be a Livian epitome, — such an epitome, to be sure, as Livy himself might have written, a condensed, but still highly rhetorical narrative. That the thought of narration was far from the mind of Tacitus would be suggested at once by the absence of simple perfects. More significant still is the *general* character which pervades the whole. And yet the passage cannot be classed with characterizations of the familiar type, owing to the exclusion of imperfects. What in another situation might be mere statement of fact, is here graphic enumeration of the features of an entire period. It must be regarded as an *enumeratio partium* on

the largest scale. And if the scale is without parallel, there was surely much to justify it here, in this rapid survey of all the reigns to be included in the *Histories*.

The fact that *opus . . . opimum* is not followed by accusatives in free apposition, but by an unbroken series of nominatives is precisely paralleled by several instances which we have already examined.¹ An objective writer might have drifted into a tame series of loose appositives, or directly into matter-of-fact statement. The intensely subjective Tacitus notes down in bold strokes his own impressions, — what he saw as he scanned the horizon of his *Histories*, what he willed that his readers should see as with his eyes. The dark side of his picture he presents in the second chapter; the brighter lights are added in the third. And the whole, under this interpretation, becomes the greatest single work of the master of impressionism.

On the other hand every edition to which the writer has had access² distributes periods with such a lavish hand through this entire passage as to show that the editors are apparently agreed in understanding chapters two and three as a narrative, strikingly rhetorical, highly finished and general in character, but still a narrative, — an abridged version of the whole work. It becomes necessary then to supply the omitted verbs; but the commentators, to whom this ungrateful duty would seem naturally to fall, content themselves with remarking on the omission of a stray *erat*, etc., perhaps in chapter three, as though the second had not been full of similar ellipses.³ The inadequacy of such comment, the absence of any remark upon the passage as a whole, of any citation of parallels, seem unaccountable. One is left to conclude that the editors have seen nothing extraordinary in an epitome as a feature of a preface, — or else, and more probably, have contrived, in spite of their punctuation and interpretation, to gain the picturesque effect which seems to be so much more completely realized, if all idea of narration is

¹ Cf. pp. 20, n. 1, 22.

² Including Meiser, Gantrelle, Wolff, and van der Vliet (1901).

³ Cf. Heraeus⁴ on 3 *init.*

discarded in favor of pictorial description, and the pointing revised to indicate an unbroken enumeration.

With such changes in punctuation the passage would run as follows :

(2) Opus adgredior opimum casibus, atrox proeliis, discors seditionibus, ipsa etiam pace saevum : quattuor principes ferro interempti ; trina bella civilia, plura externa ac plerumque permixta ; prosperae in Oriente, adversae in Occidente res ; turbatum Illyricum, Galliae nutantes, perdomita Britannia et statim ommissa ; coortae in nos Sarmatarum ac Sueborum gentes, nobilitatus cladibus mutuis Dacus, mota prope etiam Parthorum arma falsi Neronis ludibrio ; iam vero Italia novis cladibus vel post longam saeculorum seriem repetitis adflcta ; hausta aut obruta [urbes] fecundissima Campaniae ora, et urbs incendiis vastata, consumptis antiquissimis delubris, ipso Capitolio civium manibus incenso ; pollutae caerimoniae, magna adulteria ; plenum exiliis mare, infecti caedibus scopuli ; atrocius in urbe saevitum ; nobilitas, opes, omissi gestique honores pro crimine et ob virtutes certissimum exitium ; nec minus praemia delatorum invisa quam scelera, cum alii sacerdotia et consulatus ut spolia adepti, procurationes alii et interiorum potentiam, agerent verterent cuncta odio et terrore ; corrupti in dominos servi, in patronos liberti, et quibus deerat inimicus, per amicos oppressi. (3) Non tamen adeo virtutum sterile saeculum, ut non et bona exempla prodiderit ; comitatae profugos liberos matres, secutae maritos in exilia coniuges ; propinqui audentes, constantes generi, contumax etiam adversus tormenta servorum fides ; supremae clarorum virorum necessitates, ipsae nece fortiter toleratae et laudatis antiquorum mortibus pares exitus ; praeter multiplices rerum humanarum casus caelo terraque prodigia et fulminum monitus et futurorum praesagia, laeta tristia, ambigua manifesta ; nec enim umquam atrocioribus populi Romani cladibus magisve iustis indicis adprobatum est non esse curae deis securitatem nostram, esse ultionem.

Such is Tacitus's sombre picture of the revolution year and the Flavian period.¹ That the great pessimist would have only wrath and contempt for the editorial assumption of real ellipses throughout such a passage, seems to need no further demonstration. But instead of attempting to draw distinctions between ellipses, nominal and real, it would be better if we had a convenient name for these nominatives. The term "nominative absolute" has been employed ; but even in its Latin

¹ Cf. Wölfflin, *Sitzungsber. der kgl. bayer. Akad.*, 1901, I. § 2 : "eine gedrängte Uebersicht des Charakters der flavischen Periode : die schweren Schicksalsschläge, welche die Stadt, Italien und das Reich trafen, und als Gegenbild der gesunkenen Moralität Züge antiker Tugend," u.s.w.

dress this is open to objection, since if the scope of our grammars is extended to late Latin, the term is required to designate a use analogous to the ablative absolute, and the genitive and accusative absolute of vulgar and late writers.¹ And in an English form the phrase would give rise to endless confusion with our own construction of the same name. "Nominative of intimation" has been more than once suggested above, in view of similar functions and frequent association with infinitives of intimation. And if the grammars of the new century can be supposed to trouble themselves about a Latin terminology, we may propose the corresponding *nominativus adumbrativus*.

In conclusion one cannot fail to observe that this rhetorical mode of description was more freely used by Tacitus in the *Histories* than in the *Annals*;² that the most conspicuous example of all stands at the very beginning of the *Histories*, and in close chronological connection with the picturesqueness of the *Germania*. This method was, in other words, the product of his most rhetorical period. Its appropriateness for an age in which the *recitatio* flourished, and every writing was judged first and foremost by its effect upon the ear, will be granted without argument. Given the ready apprehension of the southern races, and their impatience of dull statement where a hint suffices, the wonder is that the *fin-de-siècle* description does not play a more important rôle in Roman prose.

¹ An actual nominative absolute (for the ablative) appears to be first found in Lucifer of Cagliari († 371); cf. Schmalz, in Stolz und Schmalz, *Lateinische Grammatik*, § 98, *An.* 3.

² In general it has been noted that ellipsis of the verb "to be" becomes rarer in the later books of the *Annals*; cf. Wetzell's statistics, *op. cit.* pp. 25, 32; Stuhl, *op. cit.* p. 29.